

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
AGENDA ITEM SUMMARY**

Meeting Date: September 21, 2005

Division: Fire Rescue Services

Bulk Item: Yes ☒ No ☐

Department: Fire Rescue

Staff Contact Person: Darice Hayes

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**AGENDA ITEM WORDING:** An issuance of a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (COPCN) to Islamorada Village of Islands – Fire Rescue for the operation of an ALS transport ambulance service.

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**ITEM BACKGROUND:** Pursuant to the requirement of Chapter 6.5 Monroe County Code, an application for an issuance of a COPCN (renewal) has been received from Islamorada Village of Islands – Fire Rescue to operate an ALS transport ambulance service from the West end of the Channel Two Bridge (approximately MM 72.5) to the West end of the Tavernier Creek bridge (approximately MM 90.8), including the entire island of Plantation Key, Windley Key, Upper Matecumbe Key, Lower Matecumbe Key, and Teatable Key, and all land filled in between the islands, all connected by US 1, Overseas Highway, all of which are within Islamorada, Village of Islands, Florida. Upon the authority of the Monroe County Fire Rescue Fire Chief, the service area will be changed as indicated below under Contract/Agreement Changes, along with the additional recommendation.\*

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**PREVIOUS RELEVANT BOCC ACTION:** Chapter 6.5 Monroe County Code allows the issuance of Certificates of Public Convenience and Necessity by the Monroe County Board of County Commissioners to providers of essential emergency medical services who comply with the requirements of said Code and Chapter 401 Florida Statutes. Islamorada Village of Islands – Fire Rescue currently has a COPCN for the period October 01, 2003 to September 30, 2005.

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**CONTRACT/AGREEMENT CHANGES:** The service area for Islamorada Village of Islands – Fire Rescue on the COPCN for the new period reads: Islamorada, Village of Islands, Florida or as otherwise directed by Monroe County Central Dispatch.

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**STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS:** Approval with the addition of recommendation on Attachment 1.\*

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**TOTAL COST:** N/A

**BUDGETED:** Yes ☐ No ☐

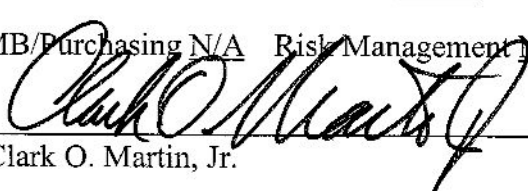
**COST TO COUNTY:** N/A

**SOURCE OF FUNDS:** \_\_\_\_\_

**REVENUE PRODUCING:** Yes ☐ No ☒ **AMOUNT PER MONTH** \_\_\_\_\_ **Year** \_\_\_\_\_

**APPROVED BY:** County Atty N/A OMB/Purchasing N/A Risk Management N/A

**DIVISION DIRECTOR APPROVAL:** \_\_\_\_\_

  
Clark O. Martin, Jr.

**DOCUMENTATION:** Included ☒ Not Required ☐

**DISPOSITION:** \_\_\_\_\_

**AGENDA ITEM #** \_\_\_\_\_

Class A  
**EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES**  
**CERTIFICATE OF PUBLIC CONVENIENCE AND NECESSITY**

WHEREAS, Monroe County Ordinance 1-1982 provides for the issuance of Certificates of Public Convenience and Necessity for Emergency Medical Services by the Board of County Commissioners of Monroe County; and,

WHEREAS, the ISLAMORADA VILLAGE OF ISLANDS - FIRE RESCUE provides

quality emergency medical services to the citizens of Monroe County; and,  
WHEREAS, there has been demonstrated that there is a need for the above named service to operate in this County to provide essential emergency medical services to the citizens of this County; and,  
WHEREAS, the above named service has indicated that it will comply with all the requirements of Monroe County Ordinance 1-1982 and Chapter 401 Florida Statutes, the Board of County Commissioners of Monroe County hereby issues a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity to this service for the period beginning October 01, 2005 and ending September 30, 2007.

In issuing this certificate it is understood that the above named service will meet the requirements of a ☐ BLS or ☒ ALS, ☒ Transport or ☐ Non-transport service, and provide service on a twenty-four hour basis for the following area(s):

Islamorada, Village of Islands, Florida or as otherwise directed by Monroe County Central Dispatch.

MONROE COUNTY ATTORNEY

APPROVED AS TO FORM

Suzanne N. Hutton  
SUZANNE N. HUTTON

ASSISTANT COUNTY ATTORNEY

Date

CERTIFICATE 05-02

September 21, 2005  
DATE OF ISSUANCE

CLERK

CHAIRMAN, BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Monroe County Geographic Information Systems (MCGIS) has assisted Monroe County Fire Rescue (MCFR) with mapping the entire county from Stock Island through Ocean Reef and delineating the entire county into a series of phantom firebox areas. The phantom fireboxes define groupings of streets into a single area into which a defined order of responding emergency vehicles would be expected to arrive at an emergency call, from first to last, assuming the response would begin from each unit's "home" fire station.

The process of measuring these boundary lines was a tedious undertaking by MCGIS and MCFR, resulting in precise measurements for boundary lines between first-, second-, third-, and fourth-due stations down to the exact foot.

Referring to the attached map, all fireboxes beginning with 21 are in the city limits Village of Islamorada, the area that Islamorada Fire Rescue desires to service based on their application for renewal of their Certificate of Public Convenience and necessity. However, Firebox 2192 indicates an area within the Village of Islamorada which is physically closer to Fire Station 22 (Tavernier) than Islamorada's Fire Station 21 which is currently sited in the Plaza 88 Shopping Center. Firebox 2191 represents an area that should currently be serviced by Station 21, however would be more quickly served by Station 22 once the new Station 21 becomes operational at Founder's Park.

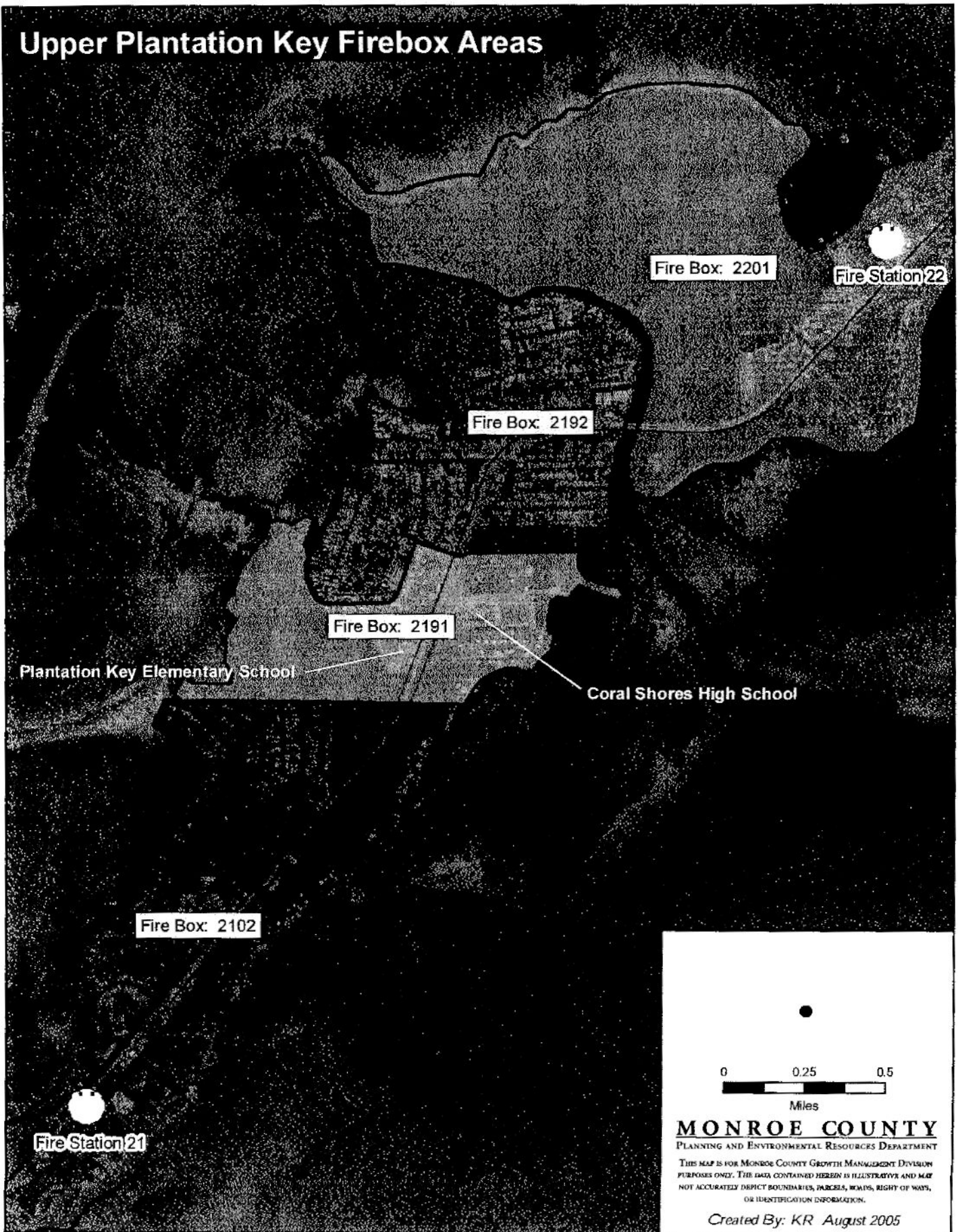
Staff recommends that an interlocal agreement be executed between Monroe County and the Village of Islamorada requiring that the closest unit(s) be dispatched to medical emergencies in each of the jurisdictions. If all units are available at their stations, that would presently require that Rescue 22 (Tavernier) be dispatched to calls in Firebox 2192.

While this may on the surface appear to be an issue of Islamorada supplying service into areas where their taxpayers reside, the fact is, unless a closest unit dispatch policy is in place, these citizens are being denied faster service from a closer resource. This can be a critical delay when a human life hangs in the balance.

Further exacerbating the issue, once Fire Station 21 moves to Founders' Park, is the fact that two Monroe County schools, Coral Shores High School and Plantation Key Elementary School, are situated in Firebox 2191. Many county taxpayers' children attend these schools, and would likely demand that the closest resource be sent to emergencies at these schools involving their children.

It should be noted that there are many instances when Rescue 21 is physically not in their zone. This can be for a number of reasons, including coverage at Station 20 when other Islamorada units are assigned to calls, or if Rescue 21 is relocated to Station 20 for training.

# Upper Plantation Key Firebox Areas



0 0.25 0.5  
Miles

**MONROE COUNTY**  
PLANNING AND ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT

THIS MAP IS FOR MONROE COUNTY GROWTH MANAGEMENT DIVISION PURPOSES ONLY. THE DATA CONTAINED HEREIN IS ILLUSTRATIVE AND MAY NOT ACCURATELY DEPICT BOUNDARIES, PARCELS, ROADS, RIGHT OF WAYS, OR IDENTIFICATION INFORMATION.

*Created By: KR August 2005*

## Monroe County Fire Rescue

**MCFRF-032 (12/01/04)**



## What Is a “Phantom Firebox”?

Phantom fireboxes were developed as extensions of cities’ existing telegraph fire alarm box systems. You may have seen in older cities the familiar *Gamewell* “cottage style” alarm boxes standing on their own pedestals or hung on convenient utility poles on street corners. Each fire alarm box, when the lever was pulled, would send a coded electrical impulse to the fire alarm office indicating the unique box number for that location. Fire alarm operators would read the box number from a tape register and then pull a run card for that box number to determine which companies were due to respond to that location.

As suburban sprawl began to occur from the city centers, it became exceedingly expensive for fire departments to expand the fire alarm telegraph cable systems into the newly developed areas. Coupled with the fact that the telephone was becoming more and more common in homes and businesses, and callers were now providing actual street address information as fires were reported, the presence of fire alarm boxes in the suburban areas became unnecessary. However, since the dispatch of fire companies was based on run cards, the creation of “phantom boxes” enabled areas of a community to be lumped into a box area for which the running order of all of the fire companies in the city would be the same. Some cities even went to the formality of picking a utility pole in the geographic center of a phantom firebox area, painting a red band around the pole as would be the case if an actual alarm box were mounted there, and stenciling the box number in contrasting numerals on the red band..

Many cities and counties in the nation have adopted a phantom firebox system on which to base the running orders and alarm level assignments of their fire and rescue resources, even though a telegraph fire alarm system has never been in operation there.